



For Immediate Release

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Use Caution When Smoking Fish

Smoking fish is done throughout Alaska this time of the year. Whether you use a commercially bought charcoal, wood, gas or electric smokehouse or prepare your catch traditionally, it's important to be careful with your equipment to prevent fires, burns, and property damage. Several fires in Alaska recently point to a common issue with home meat smoking devices. Various factors included using the smokers too close to something that could catch fire, not cleaning the smokers, and leaving the smoker unattended. Leaks or breaks in equipment also cause fires particularly with gas smokers.

The Alaska Division of Fire and Life Safety recommend that all Alaskans follow these tips to keep safe this summer while preparing your catch.

- When using a smoker, read and follow manufacture requirements for safety.
- Smokers are to be strictly used outdoors in a well-ventilated area out of the wind.
- Never use your smoker on a combustible surface, i.e. decks, lawns or other vegetation.
- Choose an open location away from anything that might catch fire including siding, deck railings, eaves or trees and brush.
- Keep your smoker away from play areas or places with high foot traffic.
- Maintain close supervision when the smoker is in use.
- Have a source of water or a fire extinguisher nearby in case an accident should occur.
- When using gas smokers, verify that there are no leaks or breaks in the gas lines
 - Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose, bubbles will reveal escaping gas.
 - If you suspect a leak, through the bubble test or by smell, and there is no flame turn off the tank and smoker and have it serviced.
- Verify that the smoker operates as intended, (heat, airflow and moisture)
- When using a traditional smokehouse all of the above apply and be sure the source of your smoke is away from things you don't want to burn.

Alaska State Fire Marshal Kelly Nicolello adds, "Fire safe behavior can keep a fire from starting. Working smoke alarms, planning and practicing your fire escape plan and adding residential fire suppression sprinklers can ensure your family's safety from a fire."

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